

THE GATEWAY

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Auditor report criticizes gov't tuition policy

COSANNA PRESTON
Associate News Editor

The Auditor General's annual report, released last month, contained strong criticisms of the affordability of post-secondary education in Alberta.

The recommendations contained in the annual report when it came out on 14 October centred around Alberta Learning's tuition fee policy.

The current policy includes a cap that prevents tuition at any given institution from exceeding 30 per cent of their base operating budget.

However, it is possible that this cap will be removed when Bill 43, or Alberta's Post-secondary Learning Act, goes through the Legislature this fall.

In the report, it is recommended that Alberta Learning improve the measure of learning with the affordability of the learning system.

It is also recommended that they periodically measure whether the tuition fee policy is effective in making postsecondary education affordable, and make postsecondary institutions comply with the current tuition fee policy.

One of the main concerns the Auditor General had was the way in which Alberta Learning measured accessibility and affordability of education in the province.

According to survey results released by Alberta Learning, 52 per cent of Albertans believe postsecondary education is accessible, down from 63 per cent in 2002 and 75 per cent in 2001.

PLEASE SEE REPORT • PAGE 2



SHAWN BENROW

IT'S REALLY NOT A BOTTOMLESS PIT John MacKenzie peers down the shaft used in the south LRT expansion.

SU may hold U-Pass referendum

SHERISSE SZYMCAK
News Writer

Students at the U of A could see the universal bus pass issue go to referendum as early as this school year.

Plans for a universal bus pass, or U-Pass, at the University of Alberta have been in the works in the SU since 1998.

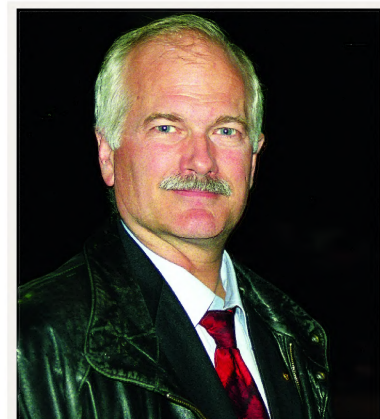
A U-Pass will allow students to have unlimited access to Edmonton Transit System (ETS) between the months of September and April; in exchange, each student will have to pay a mandatory fee somewhere in the range of \$60-80 each semester.

"If the U-Pass gets voted down in a referendum, the issue will finally be laid to rest. If the students really don't want it, we can't pursue it."

CHRIS SAMUEL,
SU VP (EXTERNAL)

Arts councillor Heather Wallace and science councillor Shawna Pandya put forth a motion in Students' Council on 21 October to draft a referendum question in order to find out if the U-Pass is something U of A students want.

PLEASE SEE U-PASS • PAGE 3



PHIL HEAD

CONFIDENT ABOUT THE NDP'S FUTURE Federal party leader Jack Layton.

NDP leader discusses politics, education

A Q&A session with federal New Democratic Party leader Jack Layton

KRISTINE OWRAM
News Editor

Federal New Democratic Party leader Jack Layton was on campus last weekend for the Students' Union's Eco-Conference and to garner support among U of A students. The Gateway had an opportunity to talk with him about how he got involved in politics, the merger of Canada's right-wing parties, and education.

Gateway: How did you first become interested in politics?

Layton: I was first introduced to politics through my experiences in my little town of Hudson, Quebec. It was a small town, about 3000 people, and we wanted a youth centre where we could hang out and do productive things.

In 1967, there was money given to every community for a centennial

project, so we organized around the notion of a youth centre that would bring the French and English kids of the little town together, because it was very divided.

"[René Lévesque's movement] taught me that when you're really intent on a goal, even if it seems like your odds are impossible, you can achieve it if you're really willing to put your shoulder to the wheel."

JACK LAYTON,
FEDERAL NDP LEADER

So we organized, we had a great presentation, we had a petition that half the town signed, but the local

businesses had proposed new change rooms for the local hockey teams instead. So they patted us on the head, said 'what a wonderful presentation,' and promptly voted against it. That was my first political experience. I was 16.

I guess the second phase was growing up in Quebec and experiencing the real discrimination at that time against Francophones and watching them rise up with the Quiet Revolution and the growth of René Lévesque's movement.

That taught me that when you're really intent on a goal, even if it seems like your odds are impossible, you can achieve it if you're really willing to put your shoulder to the wheel.

You left your position as a University of Toronto professor in January when you became leader of the NDP. Do you miss it?

PLEASE SEE LAYTON • PAGE 2



7 Tiffany's! Cartier Talk to me Catlin Cravshaw, tell me all about it! Today in Features, find out what's being done about human rights violations in the diamond industry.

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Outside

Thursday Flurries, <CHACK> where did this cough come from? High -5, Low -13
Friday Sunny, SAKS! AIDS? Better quarantine the office! High -5, Low -14
Saturday Sunny, two tablets every six hours and a quart of Buckley's, High -4, Low -11
Sunday Sunny, that's it! Break out the medicinal "couch"! High 0, Low -10
Source: Environment Canada

From the archives

A petition was signed by University of Alberta law students and faculty expressing disapproval of judgements made by a Calgary judge. Chief Justice J/H Milvain had been punishing marijuana and hashish use with prison sentences of up to five years. Petition organizers admitted that those who signed the petition would not necessarily be free from legal retribution. As a result, one petition organizer said that many students who agreed with the petition would not sign. The petition was sent to the Justice minister in Ottawa, whose department was reviewing drug laws at the time. The letter expressed concern that the decisions might set a dangerous and unfair precedent.

1969



15 The Man is back this week in Computer Blues. He's using his man muscles to woo the Hottest Girl. More accurately he's using Wingman to get to her. Will he succeed?

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colophon

The Gateway is created using Apple Macintosh computers, Hewlett-Packard Scanjet 3C and Unix Astra 4000 flatbed scanners, and a Canon CanoScan F4020 optical film scanner. Adobe Photoshop is used for layout. Adobe Illustrator is used for vector images, while Adobe Photoshop is used for raster images. Adobe Acrobat is used to create PDF files which are burned directly to plates to be mounted on the printing press. Text is set in a variety of sizes, styles, and weights of Helvetica, Helvetica, and Arial. The Gateway's games of choice are EVE and The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past.

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CAUS fears Auditor's report will be ignored by province

REPORT • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

However, the Auditor General noted this number might be inaccurate because of the complicated wording of the survey question.

"We don't think that the department can act on the results of that survey information because the answer is difficult to interpret," explained Merwan Saher, assistant auditor general of professional practice and quality assurance.

Alberta Learning public affairs officer Katrina Bluetchen agreed with the findings that the percentages may be inaccurate and suggested this might be a result of an inappropriate question trying to solicit a specific answer. She stated that enrolment numbers are higher now than ever, indicating that finances are not a barrier.

"Enrolment at postsecondary institutions has increased extremely significantly in Alberta and that's for Albertans at all income levels, particularly Albertans at lower income levels."

Saher would not comment on Bluetchen's claim but noted the Auditor General only reports recommendations based on facts. The interpretations of the recommendations are left up to Alberta Learning.

Chris Samuel, Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) Vice-Chair and U of A Students' Union Vice-President (External), was quick to criticize Alberta Learning, stating that the majority of the report merely confirmed what Alberta's students' unions and CAUS had suspected all along. He also refuted Alberta Learning's suggestion that affordability was not an issue of accessibility.

"The reason enrolment is going up is because postsecondary education and university education are becoming more important. It's becoming more and more of a necessity in the workplace and that's why we see enrolment going up. It's not because the financial barriers are coming down," said Samuel.

However, Samuel's primary concern

was the enforceability of the Auditor General's recommendations, noting that many of the recommendations had been made previously and ignored by Alberta Learning.

To enforce the recommendations, Samuel suggested that students take Alberta Learning to task in public and in the media to demand accountability.

Bluetchen said the recommendations would be addressed through Bill 43, but did not expand on if and how they would be enforced.

"If the government has committed to making a change, we ensure that change has taken place. Essentially, if the government accepts the recommendation and does nothing about it, we will report the issue again."

MERWAN SAHER, ASSISTANT AUDITOR GENERAL, PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

In the end, Saher admitted there is little the Auditor General's office can do if the recommendations are not adhered to.

"Every year, having made our recommendations, we wait to see if the government has accepted them. Then we are very rigorous in what we call our follow-up audits. If the government has committed to making a change, we ensure that change has taken place. Essentially, if the government accepts the recommendation and does nothing about it, we will report the issue again," said Saher.

Saher expects responses from the ministry by the end of this year or early 2004.

Layton wants a 'steady reduction in tuition fees'

LAYTON • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Layton: This is the first time in 32 years I haven't taught a course, but I've only been at this nine months, so it's too early to say. As long as my party feels like it's moving in the right direction and we're accomplishing what we set out to do, I'll stay. I love the university environment, and I'd be thrilled to go back, because I've already learned an enormous amount over the last few months.

The thought of going back and teaching again and sharing some of what I've learned during my full-time working life is certainly an attractive notion.

Gateway: The big national political issue right now is the merger between the Alliance and Progressive Conservative parties. How do you think this will affect the NDP?

I think it's going to be positive because I think Canadians are actually moving to the left. They're moving away from that agenda that said 'slash and burn, just give us our money back in our pockets.' Well, since that attitude took hold over the last decade or so, we've found that some of the big corporations aren't the model citizens we thought they were.

[Canadians] also see our social services and our schools and our cities struggling and needing some investment, and I think they'd like to see some improvement there. So I think it opens up some terrain for us, but the question will be if we're successful in grabbing hold of it and presenting a message that people find exciting and positive.

What do you see as the biggest issue currently facing your party?

It's a question of whether we can build the effective national alternative to the right-wing and conserva-

tive agendas that are out there, and I think the majority of Canadian's values are very in-synch with where we stand, so the challenge for us is really being effective in getting people excited about where we're going. The membership of the party has almost doubled since our low point 15 months ago, and that's exciting. So it's a whole step-by-step building process.

"We're saying there should be a postsecondary education act that is very clear about where federal funding is flowing. We've proposed stepping it up and paying for it out of tax cuts on the corporate side."

JACK LAYTON, FEDERAL NDP LEADER

There has been a lot of controversy across the country in recent years about the accessibility of postsecondary education. What is the NDP's stance on this?

We're saying there should be a postsecondary education act that is very clear about where federal funding is flowing. We've proposed stepping it up and paying for it out of tax cuts on the corporate side. Secondly, we'd like to see that money used to help achieve a steady reduction in tuition fees, particularly in provinces where they're particularly high, and we also want to see investment in our post-secondary institutions. Plus students need affordable housing because student debt isn't just composed of tuition, it's the living costs as well.

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STREETERS

Compiled and photographed
by Jake Troughton and Ivica
Folnovic

The Students' Union may hold a referendum to see if students support the idea of a universal bus pass costing \$60–80 a semester with no opt-out clause.

Would you support a U-Pass?



Rebecca Reeves
Environmental
and Conservation
Sciences IV

I think that's a great idea. Whatever we can do to get people on buses instead of driving is going to benefit all of us, because it's going to decrease air pollution, congestion on our streets and noise. So everyone will benefit by taking more cars off the road.



Katy Holton
Education III

I guess I don't see the point. A lot of students don't use a bus pass, so there should be no reason that they should have to pay for one if they're not going to use it. I don't think it would be a good idea. If you know that you are going to use a bus pass, then you would get one. I don't think students should be forced to.



Sofia Rashid
Agriculture IV

I probably would. I take the bus, so I'm paying \$53 per month. I think most people take the bus anyway. I'm not sure. Most students do take the bus, but people that don't could use it too. I think it would be good because if people are paying for it, they will use it. It has a good effect on the environment too, as opposed to people driving to school.



Tyler Vreeling
Arts II

It's a heck of a lot cheaper than it is now. Now it's like \$60 a month, so \$60 to \$80 per semester would be great for students. They're using the bus all the time anyway. The bus is making money off them, so why not give them a break? It's a pro and con list. It's hard to rationalize, but I'd say that the pros outweigh the cons. There's a lot more students taking the bus, you're rewarding kids for taking the bus, and it's better for the environment.



LEANNE BROWN

AFFORDABLE TRANSIT FOR ALL Arts Councillor Heather Wallace.

SU seeking money from government for U-Pass

U-PASS • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The motion has been referred to the SU Internal Review Board (IRB), which now has the task of drafting the question.

According to Vicki Gudelj, market planner of community relations for Edmonton Transit, ETS is looking to set the price of the U-Pass so that the money collected will offset the pass, cash, and ticket revenues they are currently collecting from undergraduate students. Edmonton Transit also plans to cover additional operating costs required to accommodate the increased demand they feel the U-Pass would generate.

"It must be made clear that Edmonton Transit is not looking to make a profit from the U-Pass concept," said Gudelj.

Based on surveys conducted by ETS in the past two years, the revenue they would have to recover for each U-Pass issued to U of A undergraduate students would be in the range of \$110–120 per semester, assuming there would be no opt-out clause.

According to Kory Zwack, SU Vice-President (External) for the 2001/2002 school year, plans for the U-Pass went into full gear during his term. Zwack felt that Edmonton Transit's surveys were flawed, so he ran his own surveys to test student ridership and the potential cost of a U-Pass to ETS. "I don't believe that the study by ETS was done appropriately or scientifically," he said. "As a result, they didn't get the proper numbers; \$120 is not accurate."

ETS is not going to lower their proposed price, and the SU isn't going to ask students to pay \$120. Consequently, it's up to the Students' Union to find funding to fill the gap. Wallace said this money isn't going to come from the SU. "The administration is tapped, as is the Students' Union," she explained. "We're asking students to pony up \$60 and the rest will have to come from other sources. I am looking to both the federal and provincial governments to help fund the U-Pass."

Wallace explained the U-Pass is part of the SU's plan to pursue various green initiatives. She explained that because of this, there is an opportunity to get money from the federal government through Kyoto initiatives and transportation grants.

The reality of a U-Pass is further complicated by the fact that Edmonton Transit fares have to be approved by City Council. "Any agreement reached between ETS and the Students' Union would need to be approved by City Council first," explained Gudelj. "St. Albert and Strathcona County's respective city councils would also need to approve a U-Pass program involving their transit properties."

"We're asking students to pony up \$60 and the rest will have to come from other sources. I am looking to both the federal and provincial governments to help fund the U-Pass."

HEATHER WALLACE,
ARTS COUNCILOR

However, Wallace says this is not currently a problem for the SU. "We don't need approval from the city. It's a bargaining thing, two corporations making a deal. It's whether or not Edmonton Transit will come to terms with us."

SU Vice-President (External) Chris Samuel is confident that students will have a universal bus pass within the next two years. "It has been very difficult without support from students all over campus to say that students really want the U-Pass. This has worked to our detriment, but I think that situation will fix itself [once a referendum is held]," he said.

Zwack is not so confident. "From what I know, I don't see the U-Pass being implemented soon. We have to work with the city guidelines."

As for students who don't want to pay for a U-Pass, Samuel says they will have a chance to voice their concerns during the upcoming referendum campaign. They can run "no" campaigns and can vote against the U-Pass in referendum, he explained.

"If the U-Pass gets voted down in a referendum, the issue will finally be laid to rest. If the students really don't want it, we can't pursue it," said Samuel.

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Why aim high when there's no equality?

WE GIRLS CAN DO ANYTHING, at least according to Barbie commercials. In any kid's hands, America's favorite blonde could be an astronaut, a doctor, or perhaps a ninja turtle's girlfriend. And if that slogan announcer's voice could be trusted, any kid could be the same.

Perhaps it's crass to equate a slogan dreamed up to hook dollies with the realities of equality in the workplace; the fact remains that women are paid less than their male counterparts and the representation of women to men in many occupations, particularly executive positions, remains uneven. But if anything, the fact that a 16-inch fashion model and her claims at Mattel claim that kids can grow up to become whatever they want to at least demonstrates those toy-buying demographics are living in a world where opportunity is equal.

Undergraduate enrolment at Canadian universities would suggest that Barbie wasn't selling lies along with her matching accessories: 58 per cent of university students are female, and in faculties of law and medicine, women make up over half of the student body. It should only be a matter of time before these women can hold any position a man does.

While more women have postsecondary degrees and are closing the gender gap in technological fields (nationally, approximately 30 per cent of master's students in math, physics and chemistry are female), there has been a recent outcry about the lack of women studying computer science and mechanical engineering. Since the mid-'90s, the number of women studying those disciplines dropped to under fifteen per cent.

The 4 November National Post reported the Canadian government, embarrassed by this decline, awarded a female mechanical engineer with a \$250 000 grant to coax other women into similar careers. It's a noble gesture, fraught with good intention and no doubt going to a researcher who earned the grant based on merit. But the context in which it's been awarded could cause more trouble to the idea of gender equality than it solves.

Encouraging awareness of any field of study should continue, but this grant was heavily influenced by the researcher's gender. Thus, the credibility of her research and that of other women entering her discipline could be soured by tokenism.

That women haven't chosen to pursue computing or mechanical engineering en masse is a curious development, though. Some opinions suggest women, being made of sugar, spice and fluffy pink Care Bears, wish to be involved in careers where they can see the immediate results of how their work helps others. Though this might explain the relatively high numbers of women in health sciences, it hardly explains the other career choices made by half the human race.

Without an understanding of why women are choosing other careers, money seems to be the easiest incentive to win over a few computer-savvy gals to-be, from borderline loan scholarships, to promises of hefty paychecks.

And perhaps money is the root of the problem. Women have every opportunity to pursue any career, but once they've graduated, it's a different scenario. A study released by Statistics Canada mentioned that female mechanical engineers make approximately \$17 000 less annually than their male colleagues. Less pay for equal work isn't going to get the ladies excited about engineering.

Girls can do anything, but until women and men are treated with greater professional equality, will doing anything be worth it?

LEAH COLLINS
Features Editor

Haikus about feeling

Freezing computers
Make me cry myself to sleep;
I want to go home.

I got bronchitis
From CU's own Chris Wilson-Smith;
I hope he's still sick.

KRISTINE OVRAM
News Editor

LETTERS

SU doesn't just focus on tuition

Aaron Braaten ("Debt relief should be tuition debate focus," 30 October) will be pleased to hear that the Students' Union isn't "focusing strictly on the tuition issue." In fact, whenever the Students' Union meets with MLAs, we make sure they hear what we'd like to change with the Student Finance program in Alberta. Additionally, through our provincial lobby organization, CAUS (the Council of Alberta University Students), we've made extensive presentations on loan reform to the Student Finance Board, an advisory body to the Minister of Learning. Students can also look forward to an SU campaign next semester which will focus on criticizing the student finance system in Alberta, hopefully to address the ever-growing problem of student debt.

But what Mr Braaten should also recognize is that the student finance system is not, and will never be, perfect. There are students who, unable to access student loans, have to turn to private lines of credit or, worse, are forced away from an education all together. But not addressing high tuition fees, we're performing a disservice to those students who aren't helped by the student loan program.

Here's another question we have to consider: what about those students who don't want to incur massive debts? A good chunk of Albertans don't enter university because of debt aversion. They simply don't want to graduate with \$20 000 in loans. This problem is only exacerbated when tuition goes up, and lower interest rates will do little to curb the problem.

There's also the issue of efficiency. The overhead costs of administering a student finance system are not insignificant. In fact, more than fifty cents on the dollar goes towards the administration of the student finance system. If the aim is to make sure students are getting the best deal out of student finance, it just makes more sense—pardon the pun—for the government to fund tuition relief directly. As an aside, Edulinx, the company that administers the student loan program in Alberta, is based out of Ontario, so the money isn't even staying in the province.

When stating that "our SU is treating education like any other consumer good," Mr Braaten essentially has the issue backwards. The student loan program in Alberta is predicated on the basic notion that postsecondary education should be financed through a system of repayable loans. Translated, this government believes that students should ultimately shoulder the costs of their own education. By pushing for more government funds to offset tuition, the SU is arguing precisely that a university education is an investment "in our social and human capital," and should not be treated as a commodity that benefits only the individual.

While Mr Braaten is correct, and several changes do need to be made around the student finance in Alberta, it's important not to forget that high costs lead to high debt loads. While it might seem like a hundred dollars here and there, don't forget that tuition increased 251 per cent since 1991. When

you take that into consideration, the gap between "Hoegaarden" and "Heidegger" seems a little bigger, doesn't it?

CHRIS SAMUEL
Vice President (External)
Students' Union

Braaten missed a few important facts

I am writing in response to Aaron Braaten's article "Jesus may have been a daddy," (4 November). Believe that Mr Braaten missed some very important points in his article that need to be pointed out.

While Dan Brown's book may be an engaging piece of fiction, it must remain just that, fiction. Any reference to the messianic claims of Jesus or the coming of an antichrist must remain based on the Bible. The Bible fits in such a way that Jesus can only be two things: the real deal, or a lying lunatic. If he's real, then he couldn't have married Mary and he did die on the cross. If he isn't authentically God, then his supposed children with Mary would have no claim to any "Mervolving" power any more than the children of any other messiah want to be.

It is also important to note that the papacy and the Vatican are not the human, political, head of the Church. The Church itself is ruled by Christ and no other. Those people he chooses to help shepherd his followers on earth are merely details.

In reference to the identity of the Antichrist let me just say that if we are authenticating the Bible (which we can only do as a whole) then the identity of that antichrist will remain unknown to the world at large until he comes to power.

I would hope that future articles musing about the eternal would follow a little more logic and show

more comprehension of the subject material.

MARLIN EHRENHOLZ
Education IV

I've got your cheese right here, Rozenhart

This letter is in response to an article ("Geoff, we're almost out of cheese," 4 November) by your Managing Editor, and my erstwhile roommate, one Adam C. Rozenhart. Adam, I shall not be your milk-and-whipping boy. When you returned home so briefly this weekend to devour the fridge's contents and sully our freshly-mopped floor, your one lazy eye failed to notice a fresh, gleaming block of delicious Canadian marble cheese ripe for the picking. Yes, Adam, the cheese purchased and sequestered by Marty, the roommate you so callously overlook.

But your lack of consideration shouldn't surprise me anymore. Our squalid cohabitation used to be magical and exciting. Now, however, you never ask me how my day was, you never take me out to eat, and you didn't even notice my new haircut. All you ever want to do is sit on the couch and eat cheese. I give you the best years of my life, Adam, and in return, you give me your dairy-fueled fury. I don't even know you anymore!

So, uh, we are still going to see *The Matrix* tonight?

GEOFF MOYSA
Law I

User stupidity the problem, not CNS

This is in response to Shea Armstrong's letter ("WebCT drives student to drink," 4 November). Those living in Lister Centre may remember that at the beginning of the year, accessing the Internet over the telephone line was almost faster than the Residence Internet Service, thanks to the viruses some residents brought with them. Shortly into September, the banning policy that Armstrong is experiencing was

strongly enforced, and—surprise—the service was suddenly speedy.

I have never been impacted by a virus even though I do not use any antivirus software. This is because all of the ways a computer can get infected by a virus ultimately boil down to user stupidity. No matter how advanced or up-to-date antivirus software or network security gets, user stupidity will always be at least one step ahead.

The majority of the viruses going around in Lister (and the Internet at large) exploit big security holes in Windows. Patches for the most recent large holes have been around for three months. You know, that little box you always close that keeps telling you there are critical updates you must install.

Even without the patches, a firewall can stop any work-network virus. Firewalls are mandatory whenever you connect directly to a public network, whether that be the residence network, the phone company's network, or your friendly neighbourhood cable guy's network. How does one setup a firewall, you ask? Try reading the extremely bright pink sign that has been posted on many floors since the beginning of the year.

Leaving a computer over three months without patches and without a firewall is just plain stupid. Stupid users' computers are infected by equally stupid users, not by CNS. Stupid users have no place on the network that I use, and I applaud the banning policy and its effectiveness at improving network performance.

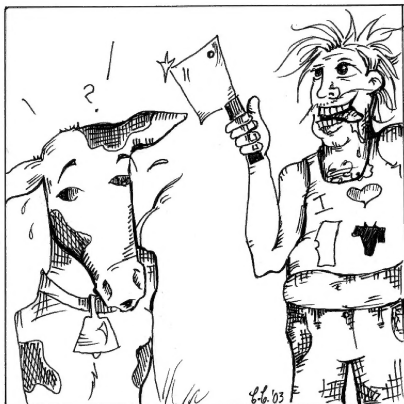
Getting banned for spreading viruses may or may not be a common occurrence for us in Lister. It's only as common as user stupidity.

MICHAEL, NORTON
Computer Engineering II

Letters to the editor should be dropped off at room 3-04 of the Students' Union Building, or e-mailed to managing@gatewayualberta.ca.

The Gateway reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity, and to refuse publication of any letter it deems racist, sexist, libelous, or otherwise hateful in nature.

Letters to the editor should be brief. Concision, people, concision.



Love-hate Relationship...

Only I can lead the united right



JAKE
TROUGHTON

Now that the Tories and the Alliance are merging, the new conservative right needs a leader. Many names have been suggested, but none of them are especially satisfying options. Peter MacKay and Stephen Harper, the current leaders, will each likely run, but both will find their candidacies to be severely hampered by the fact that no one cares about them.

Mike Harris has declared that he won't lead the leadership, presumably because he'll be too busy trying to qualify for next year's Brier to mount a credible campaign. *Montréal Gazette* publisher and former Canadian Football League commissioner Larry Smith has also been mentioned, but his tendency for ill-considered expansions into the United States could be problematic. There is one potential candidate, though, whom I feel is eminently qualified for the job: me.

Certainly, there are several obstacles in my way. My campaign will be hindered by the fact that I don't have a substantial amount of money (or, for that matter, even an insubstantial amount), nor the connections to raise any. In fact, I have a proven inability to convince people to give me money. I also have no experience in politics at any level. The closest I've come to getting involved in federal politics is that time I went to a meeting of a campus political club whose president

"In an emergency, throwing out a random policy statement—for example, my plan to extend the American ban on Canadian beef into Canada—should effectively counter any lingering appeal. In the unlikely event that any members still support me, I'm fully prepared to hit on them."

was really cute. While in theory, political science is my minor, in practice I've taken only one political science class in the past five terms and make no claim to have understood it or even to remember the names of the theorists studied. My resumé, in short, is not extensive.

Another significant difficulty in my quest to lead the united right is that I am not, in fact, a conservative. While I don't consider this a flaw, my research suggests that for some reason, many conservatives would likely count it against me when casting their ballots.

Despite these obstacles, I believe that I am the best choice for the leadership of the new party. A political body spawned from bitter rivals needs a leader who can unite it and give members a common cause. I can give the Conservative party a rallying point that, while not the most ideal, is the most likely to succeed: under me, all members of the party will hate their leader.

Getting a majority of members to hate me will not be difficult; one off-hand remark about setting a wedding date with my life partner Steve ought to do the trick. Unanimous hatred, though, is tougher. Even Sheila Copps garnered the support of a small percentage of Liberals, despite views that make half of the NDP say, "damn, what a whacko lefty!" But I believe I

can manage it.

As leader of the united right, I pledge to show no interest whatsoever in leading the party, or in the welfare of the party, or in any of its members. My platform will consist of nothing but making a series of silly jokes about the other candidates. This would do little to advance the conservative cause, but it would cause me a great deal of personal satisfaction, which is far more important.

In an emergency, throwing out a random policy statement—for example, my plan to extend the American ban on Canadian beef into Canada—should effectively counter any lingering appeal. In the unlikely event that any members still support me, I'm fully prepared to hit on them. I'll go to any length to unite this party.

Some might suggest that having a universally-hated leader is a liability for a political party. Under normal circumstances, that would true. But these are not normal circumstances. It would be great for the Conservatives if they had a common principle, issue, or favorite band, but there is no such shared ground. A common hatred is all they can hope for, and of the few who can inspire such hatred, there's only one who wants the job. For years, the right has suffered from unlikable, uncharismatic leadership; I can finally turn that to their advantage.

Paul Martin should consider a better endorsement than Bono



ADAM
ROZENHART

Paul Martin, it turns out, really likes rock 'n' roll. In fact, he likes it so much he's asked Bono, of U2 fame, to speak at the Liberal Party convention. Unless Sheila Copps can get her shit together and have Martin offend, Bono will stand alongside Martin, this country's future Prime Minister, and extol the virtues of debt relief and assistance in helping fight the AIDS epidemic in Africa.

It shouldn't surprise anyone that Bono's agreed to do this. He's been the posterboy for aid in Africa since his music started to suck about ten years ago. What's most surprising is that Paul Martin asked Bono to attend the convention to begin with. Sure, the Liberals have been making headlines with their plans to provide cheap pharmaceuticals to the troubled African continent. But Martin should be using a different, more prominent and glitzy celebrity to champion his bid—if only indirectly—for the Liberal throne. He should think bigger, think more popular, more dashing, and more charismatic. Below are just a few alternatives to the perennially irritating Bono:

Jared Fogle Sure, he may be coming off as a smug prick in commercials lately (which, incidentally, seems to be the image Subway's going for), but

with recent headlines decrying the girth of our nation's children, Fogle could help Martin usher in a new era. An era of fresh bread, low-fat sandwiches and sandwich artistry the likes of which Canadians have never seen.

"Macho Man" Randy Savage On the heels of the release of *Be A Man*, his thirteen-track album, Macho Man has more than enough star power to back Martin. Not only can Savage talk a good game, but he could protect Martin from any subversives who might try to take away his Liberal crown. Imagine Savage and Peter MacKay squaring off in the ring while Miss Elizabeth and Steven Harvey go at it on the sidelines. This is what Canadian politics should be.

Pierre Elliott Trudeau I know he's dead, and I realize that the National Energy Program made him less than popular out west, but MacKay could definitely benefit from a plourette lesson or two.

Martin is, without any sort of hyperbole, the boringest guy in Boringtown.

Martin's visage would also benefit from a splash of colour starring Trudeau's patented rose pin styles. And if Trudeau wouldn't pander to the FLO, you can bet your ass he wouldn't pander to the American government, something many Canadians (myself included) are concerned about in a Martin government.

The bottom line is that Martin should be more selective about who he gets to endorse him and his policies. Bono? He's so 1990.

Martin needs the fresh blood of Jared Fogle, the muscles of Randy Savage, and the charisma of Pierre Trudeau to succeed in his post as Liberal leader. Without those things, he's just another Jean Chrétien. Except without cerebral palsy.

Dave Alexander's TOP TEN

SigsRoy's recovering

- 10 No longer shrieks uncontrollably at the sight of a Frosted Flakes box.
- 9 Busy picking out stylish neckerchiefs to hide scars.
- 8 Already rescheduling hundreds of missed waxing and tanning appointments.
- 7 Heart monitor in hospital room replaced by a laser light machine ahead of schedule.
- 6 Listening to "Eye of the Tiger" and getting wicked psyched up to bitch-slap the stripes off a certain pussy.
- 5 Dazzling nurses with latest illusion: The Vanishing Bedpan.
- 4 Doctors finally massaged Botox in face enough to remove look of absolute horror.
- 3 Working on plans for new show called Siegfried & Roy's Rare and Exotic Tiger Slaughtering.
- 2 Has been fitted for orthopedic space wizard disco robes.
- 1 Craving solid food again, notably German sausage.

Libraries Open Remembrance Day

On Tuesday, November 11th, the Cameron, HT Coutts, JW Scott and Rutherford libraries will be open from 11:00 am - 6:00 pm

www.library.ualberta.ca/hours/



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THE GATEWAY

Ich bin ein Raider of the Lost Ark von Pontienheim?



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Student Financial Aid Information Centre (SFAIC)
Financial Aid Advisor (FAA)

Description of FAA Position

The main job role is to assist students coming to the office seeking guidance regarding student funding options, most commonly assistance with Canada and Alberta Student Loans applications and appeals. FAAs also provide one-on-one counselling sessions for students in complex difficulties, including budgeting skills and advocacy for difficult loan related situations. They refer students, when appropriate, to services on and off campus, and interact with the Free office, financial service institutions and provincial student financial representatives. They also complete research projects under the guidance of the Associate Director, Financial Information.

In the 2002-2003 academic year (September to December), FAAs dealt with 22,504 student queries.

Qualifications:

- Students from all faculties are encouraged to apply. This position offers experience particularly beneficial to those who want to pursue careers in financial services.
- Must be a current Student Union member (i.e., undergraduate student)
- Must be non-judgmental and able to assist students dealing with complex stressors
- Must have the ability to offer confidential, accurate customer service
- Must be professional in manner and appearance
- Must be knowledgeable or able to learn about student loans or bursary programs
- Special skills that would be an asset include: knowledge of Macintosh computer applications, interest in writing and research.
- Preference will be given to candidates involved in campus activities and experienced in student life.

Shifts:

FAAs usually work approximately 10 hours a week during the school year, with a minimum of two hours per shift.

Wages:

\$7.02/hour during training, \$9.10/hour thereafter.

Application Instructions:

Applicants are encouraged to visit our website at www.su.ualberta.ca/sfaic or to come into our office at 1-80 SU-B. Please submit resume and cover letter to Claire Auld, Director, Student Financial Aid Information Centre by 4:30pm, Monday, November 17, 2003. Please be aware we will interview for these positions in the week of November 24, 2003.

This posting is for several positions in the upcoming winter term – paid training for successful applicants will be arranged in December.

If you would like to review all Students' Union job postings, they can be found at this website: www.su.ualberta.ca/career/index

Scrap the GDP-based accounts system



AARON
BRAATEN

If there's one positive thing I could say about Paul Martin, it's that he might refurbish that outdated policy-making relic known as the gross domestic product. Canada needs to overhaul this antiquated tool if policy is going to make a lasting difference in human well-being and if Canada is going to chart a sustainable future in economic development.

For those without Econ 102 under their belts, the GDP is a system of national accounts used by nations to keep track of how they are progressing economically; in its most primal form, an increase in the GDP is good, whereas a decrease is bad. In this framework, government expenditures on oil-spill cleanups benefit society as much as government expenditures on educating punks like you.

GDP growth is a quantitative measure, but it generates controversy concerning its qualitative aspects. As the United Nations has highlighted, jobless growth in the GDP occurs when more money trades hands, but no extra jobs are generated. Voiceless growth happens when GDP increases at the expense of democracy. Rootless growth occurs when more GDP translates into a loss of cultural identity, and so on. This is precisely why Simon Kuznets, the Harvard Economics professor who invented GDP, warned us in 1962: "Goals for 'more' growth should specify more growth of what and for what." Economists tend to

"Growth for growth's sake tends to be an unquestioned assumption, but if economic growth comes at a cost to other things we value, such as ecosystem integrity or gender equality, growth for growth's sake is more cancerous than contributory."

get excited about quantitative growth, but shrink when asked about the qualitative aspects. Soft proof: try asking an economist what an "appropriate" income distribution is.

Some critics would argue that the GDP's like a calculator without a subtraction button: it goes up regardless of whether or not consumers regret making a purchase. Ask someone who's trying to quit smoking to help you figure this one out.

The typical GDP saint is a recently divorced and overweight chain-smoking male taking prescription drugs for smoking-induced cancer, who drives his Ford F-350 to pick up his carton of smokes and then totals it on the way to his colonics session two blocks away. Everything he does, to paraphrase George Bush Jr., "makes the pie higher," but nothing really adds to his welfare.

The GDP sinner, however, is a woman, secure enough in her beauty that she doesn't spend all her disposable income on cancer-inducing cosmetics, doesn't smoke, volunteers her time at the Campus Women's Centre, is in a secure relationship and speed-walks to the farmer's market to buy alternative, fair-trade, non-corporate menstrual products (apologies to any feminist friends I might still have). The point is that a multitude of nurturing and welfare-enhancing activities are not counted in GDP simply because they do not occur in the market.

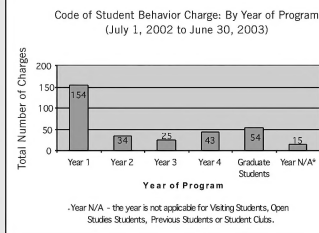
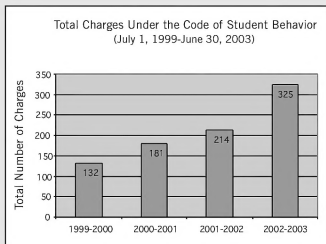
This is why the people at Re-Defining Progress, an American policy think-tank, have come up with a new index of well-being: the Genuine Progress Indicator makes an initial attempt at adjusting the GDP figures to the reflect social values that underpin welfare. What's good news is that if the Canada Well-Being Measurement Act goes through, Canada could be the first nation to adopt the GPI as an index of well-being.

Back in June, the House of Commons approved a key directive which simply stated: "the government should develop and report annually on a set of social, environmental and economic indicators of the health and well-being of people, communities and ecosystems in Canada."

What would this mean? For one, Canadians might question our growth fetish. Growth for growth's sake tends to be an unquestioned assumption, but if economic growth comes at a cost to other things we value, such as ecosystem integrity or gender equality, growth for growth's sake is more cancerous than contributory.

The GPI is by no means a perfect measure of welfare, but neither is GDP. If anything, a new system of national accounts for Canada will help us to examine the welfare costs of generating GDP, and hopefully bring our economic activities more into line with other spheres of life.

DID YOU KNOW THAT CHARGES UNDER THE CODE OF STUDENT BEHAVIOUR ARE ON THE RISE?



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<http://www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm>

For further information or assistance you can contact the Student OmbudService at:

492-4689 or log on to <http://www.su.ualberta.ca/ombuds>

Provided by the GFC Campus Law Review Committee (CLRC)

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Beyond Blood diamonds

WORDS: Caitlin Crawshaw
PHOTOS: Matt Frehner

The relationship between human rights violations and the diamond industry is as multifaceted as a cut gem, and as abrasive as a raw stone. Few understand the implications of buying a diamond from places ridden with conflict; those who are familiar with this issue seem as rare as the diamonds themselves. Child labourers in diamond-producing countries dig mines for little pay or food, and slave labour may be being used to work the dazzling cut of the rocks you see. Civil wars, rebel groups, and mafia associations profit from these human rights violations, and the death and misery they cause have tarnished the industry.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

Decision of the Discipline Interpretation and Enforcement Board



JONES vs. HARLOW, REIKIE, and STUDENTS' COUNCIL

DATE: Thursday October 30, 2003

D.I.E. BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Christopher Samuel, Chair, Ben Aberant, TJ Adhithetty,

Kyle Kawasumi, Michelle Kelly

APPEAL DETAILS:

Appellant: Chris Jones

Respondents: Gregory Harlow, Speaker of Students' Council;

Paul Reikie, Student Councilor for the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics; and Students' Council

SUMMARY OF ALLEGATION AND RESPONSE:

Paul Reikie was elected as a Student Councilor for the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics for the 2003–2004 year. Due to his summer job, Reikie was unable to attend the Students' Council meetings during the summer, and, as such, he appointed a proxy to attend in his stead. Unfortunately, Reikie's proxy failed to attend three consecutive meetings of Council.

Bylaw 100 Section 11 mandates that any Councilor who fails to attend (or have their proxy attend) three consecutive meetings is immediately suspended from Council. At the meeting immediately following their suspension, the (suspended) Councilor is expelled from Council unless Council moves to reinstate the (suspended) Councilor following a presentation by the (suspended) Councilor or a delegate.

Reikie was suspended from Council at the meeting of June 24, 2003. He failed to present (or have a delegate present) at the next meeting (July 8, 2003), and thus was automatically expelled from Council. Bylaw 100 Section 11 further provides that no expelled member of Council is eligible to be re-elected, appointed, or serve as a proxy to Council in the year in which they were removed.

Reikie attempted to run in the September 23–24, 2003 by-election held to fill the vacant seat in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics. His attempt was refused by the Chief Returning Officer (C.R.O.) on the basis of Bylaw 100 Section 11 (as explained earlier). Reikie then appealed to the Discipline, Interpretation, and Enforcement (D.I.E.) Board, the Board declined to act on his appeal.

On the basis that he believed the D.I.E. Board did not issue its ruling within its one week time limit, Reikie appealed the Board's decision to the Students' Council Appeal Advisory Board (S.C.A.A.B.), agreeing with Reikie's assertion that the D.I.E. Board committed a procedural error, then forwarded Reikie's original case to Council to deliberate. At the Council meeting of September 23, 2003, Reikie asked Council to overturn the ruling of the D.I.E. Board that he was ineligible (and, in effect, to grant him an exemption to Bylaw 100 Section 11). Council overturned the ruling of the D.I.E. Board, provided Reikie with an opportunity to ask for his reinstatement, and then appointed Reikie to fill the vacant Student Councilor seat for the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics.

DECISION:

Unquestionably, the circumstances and issues involved in this particular case are very complex. The D.I.E. Board, however, has crystallized the pertinent details as follows: S.C.A.A.B. erred when it allowed Reikie's case to be forwarded to Students' Council for deliberation. Reikie based his appeal on the belief that the D.I.E. Board committed a procedural error by not issuing its ruling within its one week time limit as specified in Bylaw 1200 Section 6h. Although Reikie did submit his appeal to the C.R.O. on Friday September 12, 2003, it was not submitted, for whatever reason, to the Chair of the D.I.E. Board until Wednesday September 17, 2003. Bylaw 1200 Section 6h clearly states that in order for a case to be initiated, it must be submitted, in writing, to the D.I.E. Board Chair. Consequently, the D.I.E. Board had until Wednesday September 24, 2003 to issue its ruling, and since it issued its ruling on Friday September 19, 2003, the Board was fully compliant with Bylaw 1200 Section 6h. Bylaw 1300 Section 11 states that S.C.A.A.B. may only forward a case to Council for deliberation if there has been a miscarriage of justice. If the D.I.E. Board committed a procedural error, or if new evidence has emerged. Since Reikie's case failed to satisfy even one of these criteria, S.C.A.A.B. had no grounds to forward his case to Council for deliberation.

Students' Council erred when it granted Reikie an exemption to Bylaw 100 Section 11, or when it struck down Bylaw 100 Section 11 (to date, it is still unclear what specific course of action Council took in order to repeal point Reikie as the legislative branch of the Students' Union but for Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics). Despite Council not acting as the legislative branch of the Students' Union but as the "judicial branch" while it deliberated Reikie's case, Council still does not have the ability to grant any exemption to anyone from any of the Students' Union's constitution articles, bylaws or policies, nor does it have the ability to strike down any of the Students' Union's constitution articles, bylaws or policies outside of the parameters set out in Articles V and VI of the Constitution. While it is true that certain courts may, under certain circumstances, strike down legislative acts, it must be clear that no body within the Students' Union (not the D.I.E. Board, S.C.A.A.B. or Students' Council) possesses such power. In fact, the Students' Union does not, yet, have an official, independent judicial branch. The most that the Students' Union has are administrative tribunals restricted to only interpreting and enforcing legislation, not granting exemptions or striking down legislation. The only circumstance where such an act may be permitted by the D.I.E. Board or Students' Council is Secondary legislation (i.e. a bylaw) conflicts with primary legislation (i.e. the constitution).

The D.I.E. Board's ability to rule on this case is questionable due to Bylaw 1200 Section 6h, which prohibits a complaint being laid against Students' Council. However, this provision is in conflict with Bylaw 1200 Section 3c, which allows the D.I.E. Board to require Students' Council to reconsider its motions that are found to be in conflict with or outside the terms of the constitution, bylaws or policies, and Article VI Section 2c of the Constitution, which empowers the D.I.E. Board to interpret and enforce the constitution and all legislation passed under its authority.

The D.I.E. Board's ability to rule on this case is questionable also due to Article XV Section 3b of the Constitution, which states that when Students' Council considers an appeal, its decision will be final.

Dealing with point 3 first, the D.I.E. Board believes that Bylaw 1200 Section 6h (specifically "with the exception of Students' Council") is in clear conflict with Article VI Section 2c of the Constitution. Since the Bylaw is subordinate to the Constitution, the D.I.E. Board officially removes the conflicting line. However, since the D.I.E. Board is interpreting its own bylaw, this interpretation must be ratified by Students' Council, pursuant to Bylaw 1200 Section 3b.

The D.I.E. Board reaffirms point 4 with certain exceptions; that is, when an appeal from a D.I.E. Board decision is before Students' Council, its decision will be final and there will be no mechanism under which that decision can be appealed unless it is clearly shown that Council has violated the Students' Union's constitution, bylaws or policies, pursuant to Bylaw 1200 Section 6h (no body within the Students' Union, including Council, can violate the Students' Union's constitution, bylaws or policies). Under these circumstances, the D.I.E. Board will be empowered to hear the case regarding how Council has violated its own constitution, bylaws or policies and then, if necessary, require Council to reconsider its motion, pursuant to Bylaw 1200 Section 3c. The D.I.E. Board cannot, however, nullify a motion by Council.

Nevertheless, S.C.A.A.B. is nothing more than just another Students' Union board, and, under Bylaw 1200 Section 6h, the D.I.E. Board thus has full jurisdiction over S.C.A.A.B. If S.C.A.A.B. violates the Students' Union's constitution, bylaws or policies, the D.I.E. Board is empowered to nullify that decision pursuant to Bylaw 1200 Section 3c. As detailed in point 1, the D.I.E. Board believes that S.C.A.A.B. erred when it forwarded Reikie's case to Students' Council for deliberation. As a result, the D.I.E. Board officially nullifies S.C.A.A.B.'s decision. The consequences of this nullification are twofold. First, Paul Reikie is hereby removed as the Student Councilor for the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics and this seat will be declared vacant. Whatever mechanism Council chooses to fill this now vacant seat, Reikie, unfortunately, will not be eligible to participate. Second, Bylaw 100 Section 11 is interpreted according to its text to wit: that is, that a suspended member of Students' Council may only present his or her case for reinstatement at the Council meeting immediately following their suspension. Furthermore, the D.I.E. Board urges S.C.A.A.B. to be more diligent in the execution of its duties, especially as it pertains to evidence gathering since this whole ordeal could have easily been avoided if S.C.A.A.B. had only contacted the Chair of the D.I.E. Board to corroborate the timeline in question.

Point 2 was stated as the official interpretation of the D.I.E. Board; that is, no body within the Students' Union (not the D.I.E. Board or Students' Council) has the ability to grant any exemption to anyone from any of the Students' Union's constitution articles, bylaws or policies, or the ability to strike down, or violate, any of the Students' Union's constitution articles, bylaws or policies outside of the parameters set out in Articles V and VI of the Constitution.

The Discipline, Interpretation, and Enforcement (D.I.E.) Board functions as the judicial branch of the Students' Union, and is responsible for interpreting and enforcing all Students' Union legislation. If anyone has any questions regarding the D.I.E. Board, feel free to contact its Chair, Chris Samuel, at discboard@ualberta.ca

CONFLICT DIAMONDS: *tainted by blood*

CONFLICT OR "BLOOD" DIAMONDS are those mined and sold to other sectors of the industry to fund violent conflict.

It was conflict in Sierra Leone that opened international eyes to the issue several years ago, following Partnership Africa Canada's (PAC) organization that does research on human rights issues and to conduct research into the causes of the region's terrorism.

"Our intention was to find out the reason for the war, whether humanitarian or human security approach we had. We didn't necessarily care about the diamond industry and we didn't necessarily care about the war," says Bernard Taylor, executive director of Africa Canada (PAC).

"But as we delved into the problem, we discovered there was a link to this international industry which was very opaque way. And it led to our first publication on Sierra Leone, where we accused the industry of being the eye to what was happening in Sierra Leone and other countries. Canadian NGO One Sky also saw the link between the conflict while doing development work in the area."

"You can't work in Sierra Leone without having some human rights component to it. You just can't," argues Taylor, Communications Coordinator.

An international spotlight seemed to fall on the issue in a global effort to address the human security problem. But conflict diamonds are just one way in which those involved in the production of the pricey stones.

BEYOND BLOOD DIAMONDS

"Whether we're talking about governments or anyone who has any control in any stage of the process, the extraction or mining of diamonds through to the potential to use those diamonds for various purposes. Their nature—their high value, their portability, the difficulty in tracing their origins—all of these make diamonds an extremely useful commodity for transactions."

Craig Benjamin

Even outside of its association with conflict, the diamond industry has a long history of human rights abuses. These violations, according to Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and PAC, include the use of child labour in the digging and the cutting and polishing sector from the mines to the workshops.

Illicit trading has also been a problem with the diamond industry. While step by step, the industry has begun to change the industry, illicit trade remains a challenge. According to Bernard Taylor of PAC, the industry accounts for 20 per cent of diamond trade.

"The bigger problem, or at least the next step problem, of course doesn't help governments or people or development. And that of course attracts all sorts of Mafia-type situations where conflict can occur. So this whole system is not as well," Taylor said.

Moreover, illicit trade prevents the government from the sale of diamonds, and thus the wealth created does not benefit the whole.

Further to these issues, Craig Benjamin from Amnesty International says governments in some diamond-producing nations are using diamonds to fund bloody conflict.

"There are clearly examples of governments responsible for abuses who are using the diamond trade to finance the war. The Republic of Congo is a striking example. There have been abuses committed by the opposition groups. The problem of conflict diamonds is [intended] to address weapons to opposition groups in the country. And that's the problem. But we also think that we have to look at any trade that puts weapons into the hands of anyone responsible for gross human rights abuses."



ILLICIT DIAMOND DIGGING IN THE KONO DISTRICT
Photo credit: Lansana Gberie courtesy of PAC

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Nikki Skuce, One Sky's

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MONIDS

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SIERRA LEONE: AN INSIDER'S TAKE ON DIAMONDS IN THE REGION

"In the war, extremely horrific violence took place: people were mutilated, their hands chopped off, including the hands of babies and women; very young people were killed and mutilated."

Lansana Gberie, researcher with PAC and native of Sierra Leone

Lansana Gberie knows of the horrors of civil war and the practices of the diamond trade as few others do. Gberie tells of the miners in Sierra Leone, whose painful work fuelled civil war in the region.

"They work very hard, they are paid very little, they are given very little food—they are just provided with simple mining implements. And when they find the diamonds, the people who are supporting them, who organized them in the first place, buy the diamonds at below market prices. So they are really very badly exploited," he recounted.

Gberie also describes the use of children in the mines, who even now continue to work in Sierra Leone's diamond industry. According to Gberie, though violence in the diamond industry was exacerbated by the war in 1991, circumstances were quite horrific prior to the conflict.

"There was a level of violence in the mining industry before the war in terms of stealing, miners attacking other miners or attacking people who have the land. Those things are going on on the same basis. It wasn't terribly widespread, or terribly violent, but it was happening," he explained.

Gberie, who has worked with both PAC and The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the region (other NGOs), has heard the testimonies of victims of the war. In a visit to the Kono, a district in which 70 per cent of Sierra Leone's diamonds are produced, he was told of an ex-soldier of the RUF (Revolutionary United Front, the rebel group responsible for countless massacres and violence), who single-handedly murdered 500 people.

"A huge mass grave was found which may contain the bodies of up to a thousand people, which was sealed off by UN investigators for a special court in Sierra Leone. If you go there right now, it has been sealed off, but you can see the skulls of people," he explained.

On this sobering note, he adds that more violence occurred in the Kono district than any other region in Sierra Leone. Once a thriving community, the rebel attacks resulted in such horror that the town was utterly abandoned.

"Hundreds of people were killed there and massacred. And almost all civilians abandoned the town. This was a huge town before the war that had up to 200,000 people. When the rebels attacked the town in late 1997, everybody abandoned the town. They destroyed comprehensively, everything—all the houses ... and they were digging for diamonds all over the town. I've never seen a town destroyed by war in this manner, completely destroyed."

THE KIMBERLEY PROCESS

ACTIONS ARE STEADILY BEING TAKEN TO

combat these atrocities.

The Kimberley Process was the product of meetings initiated by South Africa in 2000, in which industry, governments and NGOs met to discuss the human cost of diamond production. Bernard Taylor, Executive Director of PAC, explains that the process is named after the Kimberley, the diamond centre of South Africa. Diamonds were found in this region in the late 19th century, spurring South Africa's modern diamond trade.

When the issue of conflict diamonds emerged in the late 1990s, it was South Africa which brought people together and created the Kimberley process, says Taylor. Moreover, until this year, South Africa had chaired the process meetings since 2000. Starting this January, however, Canada will take over the chairing role.

Taylor is encouraged by this, explaining that Canada's involvement in the process is quite good, in PAC's estimation.

"The fact that Canada has come forward to chair the process now is very positive. South Africa has wanted to pass on that role to someone else since it's been doing it itself for three years now," enthused Taylor.

Emerging from the meetings is a system designed to create a greater level of accountability and transparency in the global movement of diamonds.

According to Taylor, the system forces those involved in the movement of rough diamonds into a rule-governed system.

"It's added a very clear administrative path for diamonds to follow, which wasn't there before, and that meant that because everything was unclear, it encouraged contraband, it encouraged illicit trading," said Taylor.

But while this is a significant step in the movement towards greater transparency and improved business ethics in the industry, the process has been criticized by NGOs like PAC, Amnesty International and One Sky for not employing a system of independent monitoring.

Perhaps just as unknown as the human security problem accompanying the industry were the Kimberley Process meetings held last week in Sun City, South Africa. The meetings, held 29, 30 and 31 October, addressed the issue of independent monitoring, in which diamond experts would regularly monitor the importing and exporting of diamonds in all Kimberley Process member states.

Said Taylor, there was some agreement to move towards a voluntary independent system of monitoring of diamond trade, but they were unable to settle on mandatory monitoring, the result PAC had hoped for.

Nikki Skuce, One Sky's Communications Coordinator, explains that NGOs have been pushing for consistent monitoring of the protocol since the Kimberley Process' conception.

"Basically what NGO's have been vying for is for the Kimberley Process to be effective and credible. There needs to be regular and independent monitoring. So basically as it stood before these current meetings were happening, was that a country like the Central African Republic, which just had a coup, could say that they're following the Kimberley Process rules and everyone would just not their head and say okay. Because there's no part of the agreement that says that they need to be monitored, that that there's any sorts of checks and balances," says Skuce.

She explains that the diamond industry, including its largest player, Debeers, has recently made a statement saying that they support some kind of monitoring. However, the meetings held last week did not result in the establishment of a system of mandatory monitoring, but left it up to member states to volunteer for monitoring.

"There's a voluntary system which is worthwhile in that it could help both establish some models for monitoring, and it could develop acceptance for monitoring," explained Amnesty's Craig Benjamin. "But in and of itself, it doesn't solve the problem. For as long as there is any point in the system, if it isn't being monitored, there's no assurance for the system as a whole, essentially."

THE FUTURE OF THE DIAMOND INDUSTRY

WHILE AMNESTY CANADA, PAC AND ONE SKY advocate mandatory monitoring to ensure that the Kimberley Process is followed by member countries, all three agree that international efforts are well on their way to solving the problem of conflict diamonds.

But as Taylor sees it, other aspects of human rights abuses will not be improved by the Kimberley Process.

"It's a mechanism, a system for monitoring the movement of rough diamonds. So it doesn't look at how the industry works in a given country, whether child labour is used, whether people are paid fairly. Those sort of social or human rights issues are not covered by it."

Nevertheless, it is the view of all three NGOs that the Kimberley Process is a good first step to forcing the industry to become more transparent.

"Although there are still outstanding issues, progress has been frankly phenomenal. The whole thing happened two or three years ago, people really started talking about it, the Kimberley Process meetings took place. Progress has been very great in terms of—it's covered a lot of areas, agreement has been found on a lot of areas," Gberie enthuses.

Like the mass graves Gberie recounts, the link between human rights abuses and the diamond industry has been unearthed in recent years because of the work of One Sky, Amnesty, PAC and other NGOs. Knowing this, we can be assured that the practices of the diamond industry will continue to improve because of the work done on conflict diamonds, and the continuing research of these groups. In a world where international action on issues is often slow, the fact that a global industry could be forced into better practices within only three years shows us that the ethics of a few activists can stand up to government and industry power.

THE PEP RALLY

Football

The exceptional Bears (5-4) football team, the best to grace this University since 1981, continues their romp through the playoffs this weekend as they head out to Burnaby in an effort to lynch the Simon Fraser Clan. The Bears already beat the hooded fangs once this year, but since those white-helmeted goons with comical Scottish accents don't know when to quit, the game goes at 12:30pm.

The game will be broadcast live on Rogers Sportsnet West, but if you're like me and wait for the weekend just to hear Bob Stauffer's silky voice slip over the airwaves so you know that everything is right in the world again, you can catch him starting with the pregame at 12:15pm on the so-called "mighty" **CJSR FM88**. So hit the mute button on the radio, crank up the stereo, and let "Hot Stauff" and the Bears entertain you.

Soccer

Der Bears Fußball team is in the CIS championships this weekend, out at the Université de Montréal. They play Los Stinglers from Concordia at noon on Thursday, El Western Ontario at noon Friday, and then sit around eating poutine and smoked meats until the gold medal final on Sunday at 10am at McGill stadium, which is where the Alouettes play. Exciting, da? GOOOOOOOOOAAAAAALLLLLLL!!!!

Hockey

The undefeated, unstoppable, uncouth and uncinematic Bears (6-0-0) are returning to action this weekend. Much like my drunken friends two weeks ago, they will no doubt be chanting "Manitoba Sucks!" as they meet the University of Manitoba Bisons at 7:30pm both Friday and Saturday in mini-Skyreach, sometimes known as Clare Drake arena.

And thanks to heaven finally answering my prayers, on Friday you can catch the game on **CJSR FM88** as called by Bob "Wat Brechtel has nothing on my dreamy eyes" Stauffer and that perpetual ray of Sun-shine, Scott Zerr.

Basketball

The **Pandas** take off from half-court in some J5 shorts this weekend for their first conference games of the year. First up are the University of Regina Cougars, who take a break from trolling bars for teenagers, on Friday at 6:30pm in the Main Gym, then bulldoze the Brandon University Lady Bobcats at Sunday at noon also in the Main Gym.

The Bears are also in action and, in a remarkable turn of events, they play the exact same teams! The craziness of it all: First Regina will lose Friday at 6:30pm in the Main Gym, then Brandon on Sunday at 2pm! Dear Lord why? Won't someone please pinch the children's?

Cross-Country

The uncanny Bears and colossal **Pandas** storm into the Université de Moncton like rabid wolves for the jubilee that is the 2003 CIS Championships. You don't need to have awesome mental powers or the ability to magnetize yourself to know that we're going to walk away with this one.

Guess What? The Flames Suck

After having successfully lulled the Flames into a false sense of security by losing the first two games they played, the Oilers, led by Bobby Orr-esque defenceman Steve Staios and sure-fire Hall of Famer Alex Hensley, will once again be back on **Hockey Night in Canada** this Saturday stomping the ever-living crap out of those pathetic wastes of skin that hail from the loon-infested burg of Grapetown, Alberta. Prepare to choke down the bitter pill that is a loss, Mr "I heart the Flames" Chury; prepare yourself indeed.

SEXY DADE BERRY
Sports Propagandi



RED ROVER, RED ROVER Slotback/Kick Returner Kendall Jeske (2) and the Bears travel west to Thunderbird Stadium where they'll meet the Clan.

Pigskin Bears still in playoff hunt

After first playoff win in 22 years, the Golden Bears head west to take on the Simon Fraser Clan

BRYAN LEE
Sports Writer

California is on fire, the sun just burst out the largest solar-flare in recorded history, and the Golden Bears football team has advanced to the Canada West final, known as the Hardy Cup. We all might as well start preparing for Armageddon.

This year's Hardy Cup will feature two historical conference bottomfeeders: the ninth-ranked Bears haven't made the playoffs since 1993, let alone won a playoff game since 1981. Nevertheless, they upset the top-ranked Saskatchewan Huskies last week in an injury-influenced 10-4 result.

The Bears will be facing the eighth-ranked Simon Fraser Clan, making their first conference final appearance since their football program began in 1965. Like the Bears, the Clan didn't make the playoffs last year, but they made the final by beating the Regina Rams 53-46 last weekend.

"Our defense doesn't want to see 50 points. We'll have to eliminate the big plays," Bears head coach Jerry Friesen said. The secondary will need to contain Clan receiver Brendan Mahoney, who caught five touchdowns passes last week, including two for over 70 yards.

"We have a solid offence, although we don't know [starting quarterback Darryl Salmon's] status. The ones will be on the defence," added defensive end Aaron Giovannetto. "Regina was a shoot-out and we don't want it to come down to that."

Salmon is out with a shoulder injury suffered three weeks ago in a game versus the Huskies. Backup pivot Cam Linke has been efficient in Salmon's place, but will need help from the other members of the Bears' talented offence.

Most notable will be Canada West MVP running back Jarred Winkel, who will need a solid game to provide for a balanced Bears attack. In the prior meeting with the Clan, a 39-21 victory, Winkel had 133 yards and two touchdowns. Winkel is also a finalist for the CIS Hec Crighton

Trophy, the Canadian equivalent to the NCAA's Heisman Trophy.

The team will also need a stronger defensive effort than they had against the Huskies, where 254 rushing yards scorched the Bears.

"We haven't been tackling well in practice," Friesen explained. "We have to improve those basic fundamentals to be successful."

Besides Winkel, five other Bears were also named to the conference All-Star team. Proving the strength of the Alberta defence, defensive lineman Derek Krinke, defensive back Klyer White and safety Jason Milne made the cut. Receiver Andrew Ford and kicker/punter Mark Wojcickowsky also got all-star nods.

The Saturday game can be heard live on **CJSR FM88** at 12:30pm and will also be televised on Sportsnet West. The winner of this contest will play in the Uteck Bowl next weekend, against either the St FX X-Men or the St Mary's Huskies who are also in action this weekend vying for the Atlantic Championship.

Bears make rink return after week off

Weekend homestand brings struggling Bisons to Clare Drake

ROSS PRUSAKOWSKI
Sports Writer

It wouldn't have taken a genius to predict at the beginning of the year that, in November, it would be frickin' freezing outside and the Golden Bears would be sitting atop the Canadian University hockey standings.

The number-one ranked Bears head back into action against the University of Manitoba Bisons this weekend at Clare Drake Arena after enjoying a week's rest.

"We've had a busy schedule since September and sometimes when you get away from the rink you're able to reenergize, rejuvenate yourselves and just get a little bit hungrier to get back," said coach Rob Daum.

It would be easy for the picture-perfect Bears (6-0 conference, 13-0 overall) to look past Manitoba, but Daum isn't taking them lightly. "I expect two tough games," said Daum. "They always play us really well so it will be a battle."

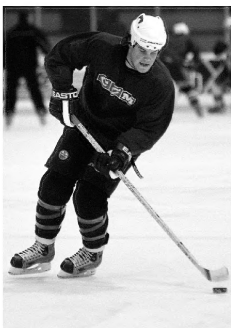
"Manitoba historically has been a very physical team, but when we played them in preseason they were a little bit more disciplined and less physical than in the past."

None of this appears to be concerning to the Bears who lead every stat category and whose stingy defence has allowed only eight goals in six games. That tight Defence could pose a big problem for a Manitoba offence that has only lit the lamp 18 times through six games.

The one area where it does shape up to be a close battle is on the powerplay, where Alberta makes good on 18.8 per cent of their opportunities, while Manitoba shuts down the opposition 87.1 per cent of the time and have three short-handed goals.

The Bisons (3-4-1) have struggled out of the gate this season and have yet to post two back-to-back wins. They continued their mediocre play last weekend in Calgary, dropping both games in their set against the University of Calgary Dinosaurs. With these losses, Manitoba now sits fourth in the Canada West conference and could potentially drop further with any more during this set against the Bears.

Gametime is 7:30pm for both Friday and Saturday's matchups. Friday's game will be broadcast live on **CJSR FM88**, with host Bob Stauffer giving the play-by-play, accompanied by the Suns Zerr.



ICE CHIP Edmonton Oilers centre Mike Cormie has been working out with the Bears while he awaits a trade or new contract. "It hasn't been a distraction at all," said Bears head coach Rob Daum. "Mike comes in and works hard, and does what ever we're doing. He's a real positive, classy guy."

Top eleven methods of sports cheating

Forget the steroids, these are the real sure-fire ways to win

JOEL CHURY
Sports Editor

It ain't your regular, sitting-in-the-backyard-with-a-flashlight type tent; it's for cheatin' purposes only. A debate is now raging over the newest form of performance enhancement, an oxygen tent, in which an athlete breathes in a lighter oxygen level not unlike a sleeping on a chair lift. This adds endurance, as the body will increase the oxygen levels in the blood when breathing in a normal atmosphere. Notable athletes that use this method of training that was developed at the University of Calgary are speedskaters Jeremy Wotherspoon, and nordic skier Becky Scott. But of course, this is just one of the myriad proven effective methods of cheating in the sports world; here, we take a look at eleven that might help you win faster than a forced asphyxiation:

11. BLOOD DOPING—In 1988, a friend of mine's parents were billeting the East German nordic ski team. While attempting to add more blood to their system, they had an accident, which resulted in the family's den being splattered *Kill Bill* style. Supposedly this increases endurance, but it's not for the queasy.

10. DOPING—It helped nab Ross Rebagliati Olympic gold in snowboarding, although I don't know how this is considered performance enhancing. The only thing that this enhances is the munchies, but everyone knows that eating ain't cheating.

9. PLACE LEAD WEIGHTS IN THE FRONT OF YOUR BOBSLED—While the Jamaican bobsled team may have subscribed to the method above, their fictional coach John Candy preferred this one. Even though the big man is from the Great White North, he cost the US Olympic bobsled team their fictional gold medal.

8. USE A POWERED GOLF CART—Disabled golfer Gabe Martin won a court ruling that allowed him to use a cart on the PGA tour. Other members were outraged at this "cheater," but then again, there's no PC in the PGA.

7. TIE A PIANO WIRE AROUND YOUR SCROTUM—When they aren't trying to cheat with golf carts, disabled wheelchair sprinters have used this method along with sticking tacks in the seat of their chairs to induce a fight-or-flight response

from the parts of their body that can't actually feel the pain of the procedure. What ever happened to good ol' fashioned Ben Johnson-style steroids?

6. GREASED UNIFORMS—Iceballers at Sacramento State attempted a new John Travolta-esque Greased Lightning attack by applying Pam cooking spray on their uniforms before a league game last year to help their players evade opponents. Obviously, the play didn't work, since they still lost the game. On second thought, maybe some Goonies-esque slick shoes would have been more effective.

5. GREASED PALMS—If you can't beat 'em, buy 'em. There's nothing that helps your chances of winning than old-school bribery. Note: this works best with IOC Ice Skating judges ... especially if you're from Russia.

4. HIRERINGERS—Can't buy the other team or the officials off? Then just buy the services of better athletes. This has been the winning strategy for many NCAA teams including the University of Indiana's soccer team, and the Springfield Power Plant's softball team.

3. USE DOCTORED EQUIPMENT—Instead of importing illegal teammates, just inject your bat with a banned substance. Sammy Sosa is the most recent guilty party, using cork in a bat meant for batting practice, but the more interesting infraction came from Yankees catcher Graig Nettles in 1971, when he filled his bat with superballs.

2. USE A BOYFRIEND AND A CROWBAR—Sometimes the best plans are the simplest, but this one is just plain stupid. Tonya Harding and Jeff Gillooly almost got away with their Nancy Kerrigan kneecap whack job, but it would take more from a crowbar to keep Kerrigan from a silver medal in Lillehammer. She may have been better off hiring a trio of nihilists, armed with a cricket bat and a marmot.

1. HIT YOUR OPPONENT OVER THE HEAD WITH A STEEL CHAIR WHILE YOUR MANAGER DISTRACTS THE REFEREE—If not a steel chair, use a title belt, or a cane, or a ring bell, or a fire extinguisher, or a baseball bat, or a garbage can, or a megaphone, or a pair of knuckles, or a kendo stick, or a stop sign, or a mannequin's head, or a guitar, or a real American 2x4, or a sledgehammer—anything, really. Regardless of the item, this is by far the most effective way to cheat, and get away with a World Wrestling Heavyweight Championship.



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vs. Brandon 2:00 pm

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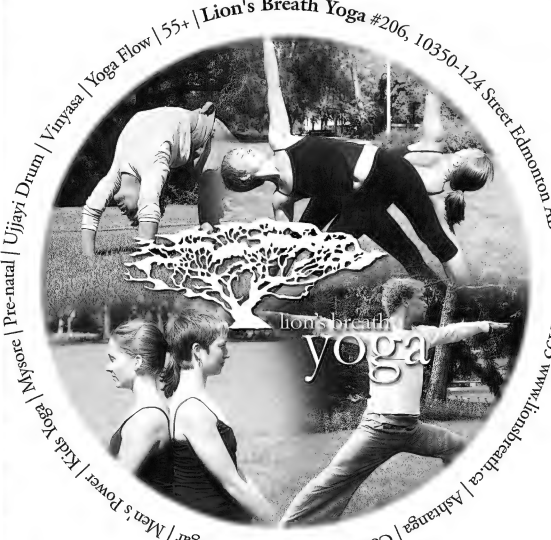
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SOCIAL
INTERCOURSE

Our illustrious Arts and Entertainment Writers go out and get the skinny on what's happening over the weekend and into next week so you don't have to.

RoachTrip:

Directed by Eric "Roach" Denis
Stanley A Milner Library
Friday, 7 November



After being featured in *SPiIT* (Squeezee Punks in Traffic), the documentary that gave last year's Local Heroes festival more edge than it could probably ever handle, this filmmaker (who goes by the monosyllabic moniker, Roach) decided to direct his own film. *RoachTrip* is about the time-honoured young tradition of the Canadian road trip told through the eyes of a few punk street kids with a camera.

It's raw. It's young. It's not for the faint of heart. The film is being shown as part of the Global Visions Youth and Media Day. If you've got lots of time to kill, you can also catch a performance by the Morillos around lunch and a screening of six shorts created by inner city youth later in the day.

Joel Plaskett Emergency

New City
Friday, 7 November



It's new album time for ex-Thrush Hermit Joel Plaskett and his band The Emergency, and like all good rock acts, they've taken the show on the road. Their latest album, *Truthfully, Truthfully*, draws from influences as diverse as Led Zeppelin and Curtis Mayfield, but the string that holds it all together is a healthy appreciation for pure, unadorned rock 'n' roll. Edmonton's own bad bass boy Whitey Houston will also be on hand to help whip things up into a Plisker-fueled frenzy.

The Arrogant Worms

Strathcona Legion
Friday, 7 November



So you thought they were dead, did you? Silly kid. While they might not exactly be at the height of their popularity, these worms are definitely still wriggling.

Since 1992, the Arrogant Worms have been busting guts across Canada with their comedy-inspired songs like "The Last Saskatchewan Pirate" and "I Am Cow." Now, they're bringing their slapstick songs back to town and for a nominal fee, you can be a part of the arrogant fun.

ERIKA THORKELESON
Arts & Entertainment Writer

Usher admits to nothing

David Usher

With guests
Saturday, 8 November
Red's

HEATHER ADLER
Arts & Entertainment Editor

David Usher may be a successful musician who's so well primed that he hardly even needs airbrushing to look fit for TV, but even after over a decade in the limelight, Usher still doesn't like making videos, talking about his music, or thinking about the future of his career. More than a little aloof, it seems Usher isn't about to divulge what he's really about, but instead just wants to leave all the judgment up to his fans.

"If I could choose not to do [music videos] then I wouldn't, but I want people to hear the music and that's one of the vehicles to get it out there," Usher states. "Generally, I find it to be a very fleeting medium; people listen to a record for a long time, but people don't go back and watch a video very often." Besides the disposability of videos, Usher says the "millions of ridiculous treatments" he's received have only added to his dislike of the form. "I've gotten just about everything you can think of: stupid, vampires, multi-coloured cats and everything in between," he adds.

"Some music affects people in a very strong way, and for others, it's just fun to dance to. I think the idea of the artist is to affect people and I hope that's what my music does."

DAVID USHER

Instead of casting himself in some lame scenario featuring fangs and frocks, Usher says he'd rather stick to videos that are more artistic and leave it to the minds of the audience to interpret them. "When video tells too much of a story, it takes away too much of the imagination of the viewer," he explains.

Although he's often accused of being just as nonsensical in his lyrical compositions as he is in videos, which generally have little to do with the songs, Usher isn't keen on the idea of

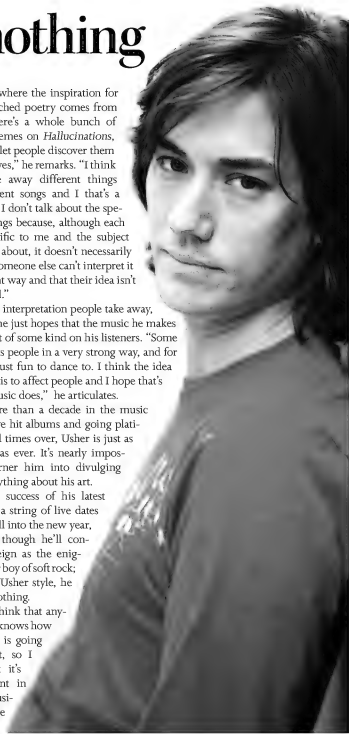
explaining where the inspiration for his rock-picked poetry comes from either. "There's a whole bunch of different themes on *Hallucinations*, but I like to let people discover them for themselves," he remarks. "I think people take away different things from different songs and I think that's a good thing. I don't talk about the specific meanings because, although each line is writing to me and the subject I'm writing about, it doesn't necessarily mean that someone else can't interpret it in a different way and that their idea isn't valid as well."

Whatever interpretation people take away, Usher says he just hopes that the music he makes has the effect of some kind on his listeners. "Some music affects people in a very strong way, and for others, it's just fun to dance to. I think the idea of the artist is to affect people and I hope that's what my music does," he articulates.

After more than a decade in the music industry, five hit albums and going platinum several times over, Usher is just as mysterious as ever. It's nearly impossible to corner him into divulging much of anything about his art.

With the success of his latest release and a string of live dates planned well into the new year, it looks as though he'll continue his reign as the enigmatic poster boy of soft rock; but in true Usher style, he admits to nothing.

"I don't think that anybody really knows how their future is going to turn out, so I don't think it's any different in the music business," he concludes.



Crush: satisfaction guaranteed

Crush

with The Deon Byron Band
Tuesday, 11 November
Sidekick Café

JAKE TROUGHTON
Arts & Entertainment Writer

Although Newfoundland-born rockers Crush may hail from the cool-kissing east coast, vocalist Paul Lamb says you won't find Celtic sounds or speech-slagging tales on his band's new album, *Face in the Crowd*. In fact, he says the two-piece mainland-transplants are influenced by just about everything but the rustic waning classically found in their home.

"It's just a stereotype," Lamb says of the asso-

ciation of Celtic music with the east coast. "It's like thinking that all you listen to [in Edmonton] is country music and that's all you grow up with because out there everybody wears cowboy hats." While Lamb does like Celtic music, it was never around as an influence for him. "I don't think I heard Celtic music until I moved to Halifax," he remarks. "[My parents] were young when they had me and they listened to all the classic '60s and '70s stuff, so I grew up on Beatles and the Bee Gees and all that stuff."

Aside from classic rock, Crush has also drawn influences from a range of contemporary artists: Bing Crosby, Lenny Kravitz, Crosby, Stills and Nash, and Eminem, among others rank high on Lamb's list of favourites, while his bandmate Cory Telford, the son of a Pentecost preacher,

grew up singing gospel music. As a result, their music, and the new album in particular, reflects a wide variety of styles.

"I think that you can hear some country influences as well," Lamb offers, an influence he attributes primarily to Telford's church background. "You won't hear it on my stuff—except for 'Reason to Love,'" Lamb notes. An earthy, Ron Sexsmith-style track, Lamb considers the tune to be "probably one of the best songs [he's] ever written to date." Lamb enjoys rap as well, but, despite his crush, it doesn't have much of an effect on Crush. "There's a song on the album called 'She Looks Right Through Me,'" he recalls, "and in the bridge there's this little guitar riff. I wanted to get someone to come in and rap over that part when we were in the studio, but nobody would go for it."

The two bandmates hope that the diverse experiences and tastes that each brings to Crush will lead them to a more mature sound. Lamb suggests that *Face in the Crowd* is a big step in that direction. "I think this album blows the first album, *Here, Away*," he opines. "I think we've gelled more on this album—the members of the band haven't matured, but the band has matured."

"There's a bunch of good pop-rock, radio kind of songs on there," he says, "but also a lot of other types of songs, songs that we just thought were good songs and we didn't give a shit if they got played on the radio or not." In fact, Lamb's so sure that people will like the disc, he makes an offer to potential buyers: "Give the CD a try. If [you] don't like it, I will personally refund [your] money. That's how much I believe in it."

So, leave your gum boots and fiddles at home if you plan to check out Crush's show this week-end. They might not be offering much in the way of east coast pride; however, with a diverse set of influences and a heart-felt pride in their work, you can be sure they'll be dishing out some danceable beats.

Smashers bring ska to the planet

After nearly a decade, The Planet Smashers are at the top of their game

The Planet Smashers
with guests
Wednesday, 12 November
Sidekick Café

MATT FREINER
Arts & Entertainment Writer

Some people just aren't made to be engineers. In the case of Matt Collyer, the vocalist/guitarist for The Planet Smashers, it took a master's degree and half of a PhD before he realized he wasn't into the whole engineering thing. "I decided to take a break for a year or so, since the band was doing so well," says Collyer. Now, almost a decade later, he still can't find time to finish that degree.

Aside from their scholastic difficulties, the Montréal ska group has also been faced with a number of problems launching their musical careers. "We sent our demo everywhere, but they turned us down. In fact, I don't think they even listened to it," Collyer notes.

After countless rejections, Collyer says the Smashers "just gave up because we were like, 'oh, no one cares about ska music, we're a Canadian ska band, we can't get noticed.' So we decided to make it easier on everyone, and start our own label, and it just kept on going." Nine years later, STOMP Records is now the premiere independent label in ska.

Collyer says it's important to find a balance between producing what the crowd desires and what is meaningful musically. "We weren't concerned about writing commercial songs—just songs that were about ourselves," he explains. "We weren't too concerned about how it's being perceived by the public." Collyer is enthusiastic about the positive reception the band's latest album, *Mighty*, has gar-



SUITS You can always tell a ska band by their pants.

nered and is proud to say they've achieved the biggest record of their career with distribution all over the US, Canada and even Japan.

Now, the band is enjoying the fruits of their labour as much as the exotic locales the larger-scale album has allowed them to visit. "We just toured with Jesse James in the UK and they let us open for them across the UK," he enthuses. "We got kind of drunk and took the hotel room apart. Not intentionally, it was just a big wrestling match, and it got out of hand. Our saxophone player peed on our bass player's leg by mistake. He was too drunk."

With these kinds of antics, it's no wonder that the Planet Smashers put on one of the most entertaining ska shows in town. As Collyer concludes, "it's been nine years of having a good time," and it's probably a lot more fun than engineering.

New film looks at the drama of adopting foreign babies

Casa de los Babys is a touching tale of American women adopting infants from Acapulco

Casa de los Babys

Starring Maggie Gyllenhaal, Mary Steenburgen,
Marcia Gay-Harden and Daryl Hannah
Directed by John Sayles
Princess Theatre
Opens 9 November

JEREMY SHUGAGE
Arts & Entertainment Writer

Despite its many deficiencies as the world's only superpower, one thing the United States has no shortage of is unwanted or neglected children. Interestingly, it also has no lack of couples who are unable or unwilling to conceive a child of their own. One might conclude that there should be no need for young, middle class Americans to go overseas to adopt the undesired infants of other nations, yet paradoxically, thousands of foreign children from all over the world are imported into American homes every year.

This practice, and the emotional effect that it has on those touched by it, are the subject of writer/director John Sayles' new film, the at times splashy but ultimately successful *Casa de los Babys*.

Shot over four weeks in Acapulco, *Casa* is a glimpse into the lives of a group of people whose reality is intimately shaped by the foreign adoption process. At the heart of the narrative are six women from various parts of the US who, for various and vague reasons, have come to an anonymous resort town in Latin America in order to take away that which they cannot get (or create) in America: a baby.

The story revolves around Jennifer (Maggie Gyllenhaal), a young, preppy girl from Washington, DC who is trying to save her marriage; Gayle (Mary Steenburgen), a born-again Christian who is trying to recover from an alcoholic addiction; Nan (Marcia Gay Harden), a clichéd, obnoxious American tourist who lies to conceal her true nature of her life at home; and Skipper (Daryl Hannah), a enigmatic fitness nut who clings to a terrible and tragic secret.

Awailing what the women reckon is a rational evaluation of their adoption applications, the six expectant mothers pass the time by comforting, amusing and gossiping about each other, while holed up in a hotel operated by the jaded and opportunistic Señora Munoz (brilliantly portrayed by Broadway veteran Rita Moreno).



MOMS Six wannabe mothers tell their story.

Over the several days that the film takes place, the Americans are introduced to secondary cast of disparate locals whose lives, all profoundly affected by fate, are metaphoric of different facets of the foreign adoption experience. People whose lives provide perspective and provoke thought into a less-than-innocuous business: the contemptuous but collaborative attorney; the filthy but sympathetic street urchin; the rich but pregnant teen; the political reactionary; the unemployed proto-migrant and the peasant chamber maid.

With a cast spanning an overly ambitious spectrum of society, which results in some frustratingly truncated character development, *Casa* is by no means Sayles' most finely-tuned study of the human condition. With that said, though, he does manage to create a celluloid sketch of a deeply emotional experience from an impressively wide array of personal angles. The intermittent provision of personal depth and background is made forgivable by the superb "big picture" context provided by such a broad cast of characters. The inconsistent pace and characterisation dead spots aside, *Casa de los Babys* is worth 95 minutes of your day.

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STUDENTS' UNION

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Pianist Slean goes into seclusion

Sarah Slean

with Ann Vriend
Thursday, 6 November
Myer Horowitz Theatre

JESSICA WARREN
Arts & Entertainment Writer

Scavenging for berries, tracking moose, hiding from the law, hosting illegal bush parties: these are reasons why most people might choose to retreat into the woods. Sarah Slean, however, just spent the last four months living in a shack on the edge of nowhere for an entirely different reason: she was writing a new album.

"I was in the forest being 'the Baroness,'" she laughs. "That's what I called my location, 'the House of the Baroness.' I didn't bring a TV or any sort of modern things, except for my little laptop."

In 2002, Slean released *Night Bugs*, which was recorded at a secluded studio in the midst of foliage and twittering bugs in upstate New York, and the experience was so positive she

again returned to solitude for the writing of her upcoming release. Prior to that, the cabaret-style songstress also put out three, lesser-known independent albums, but Slean says the only real difference having a major label deal makes is a bigger budget to fuel her and her isolated ideals. "When you're indie you're always strapped for cash," she notes. "With a label it's easier, it's much easier."

While Slean admits her style of writing is not typical of the mainstream, the extra funding has helped her to see a "slow, but steady" increase in her audience. "Every time I go into a city there's a few more people, and I get to keep doing what I love doing," she notes.

Slean says a lot of the inspiration she gets also comes from visual artists like Viennese painter Egon Schiele, whose work she recently saw while visiting his native city. "I was sitting in the middle of the room in the Leopold, where the Schiele paintings are displayed, crying. It was overwhelming," she exclaims. Slean notes that paintings, and other works, help to stim-

ulate her imagination and aid in the creation of the characters in her songs. "They do sometimes just pop into my mind; I will see a whole picture and characters, but a lot of times, dreams, books, movies and the other artists that I really like also influence me."

Having received classical music training at the University of Toronto, Sarah also admits to being heavily influenced by the masters on which she was raised. "My first love in the musical world was classical music and that will never leave me. I still don't think there's any digital music around that can mimic the force of the emotional power of a live symphony orchestra. They just can't do it," she professes. Slean's own music straddles the line between overtly classical and electronic styles creating a sound that strives to be, as she says, "a marriage of the two."

Her take on music has helped Slean to garner larger audiences as well as a small force's worth of media attention. She has toured Canada, the US, and Europe, but still remains protec-

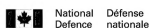


SARAH SLEAN A forest-dwelling, piano-playing Baroness.

tive of her own brand of creativity, believing that "celebrity crap is a bit of a disease that can warp art as opposed to nurturing it."

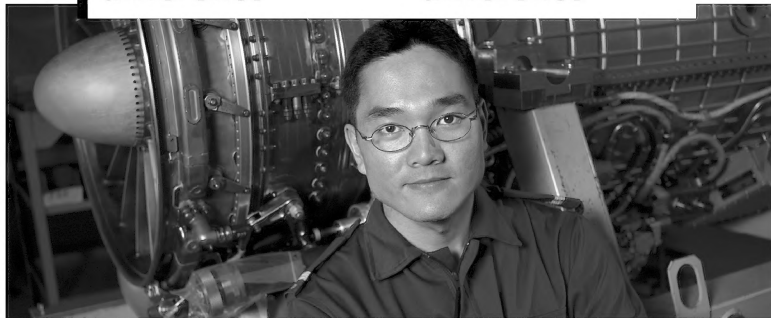
The constant moves around Toronto,

and into the woods of Ontario have helped keep her from falling prey to such a disease, as she looks forward to the release of her new album, sometime in spring next year.



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AARON BRAATEN
Arts & Entertainment Writer

If you want old news on the Y2K madness, the Pokemon craze, the 2000 US Presidential election or the DC Sniper, but find that the websites are all too old to be displayed, you might want to check out the Internet Archive.

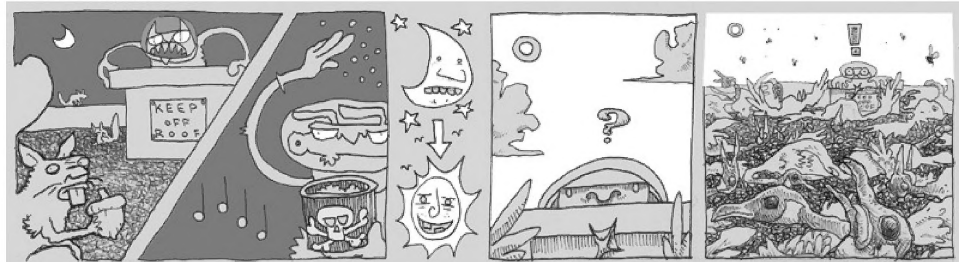
The Internet archive is a web-bot that surfs the internet, gathering data on websites and archiving them for future use; it's kind of like a nice version of the Echelon apparatus used by intelligence agencies to gather data on everything else under the sun. In techy terms, the Internet archive contains 300 terabytes of internet data and grows at a rate of twelve terabytes per month. It's a great way to preserve the ever-changing landscape of internet-based knowledge, but it could be a thinly disguised version of Big Brother.

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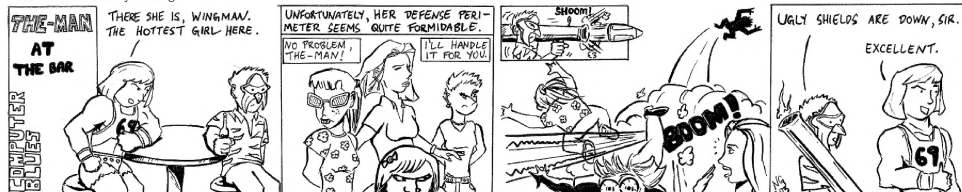
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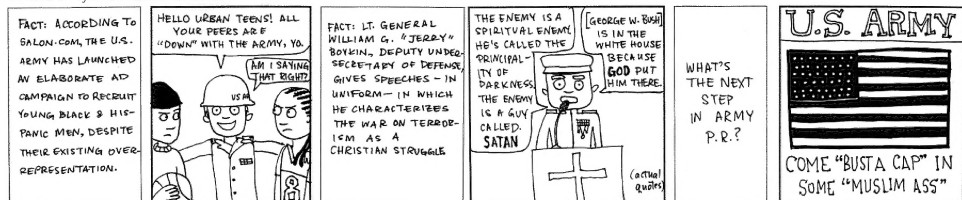
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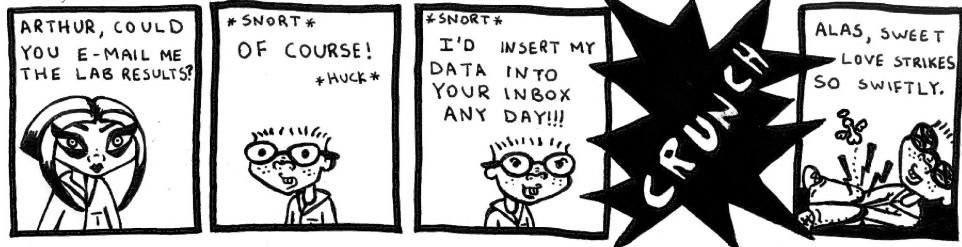
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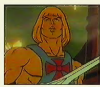
Pimpin'. What's what? K.ghettofab/f.yay-arms N. 14 November-vids (boudakal + streets + Tetral) + pool H/I @ Missy's place out.

We got appliances today! YES! Real food! I didn't get to see the Hamon Stoin yesterday because I had to write a paper. However I was under the impression that it was miscast in the extreme. Whatever.

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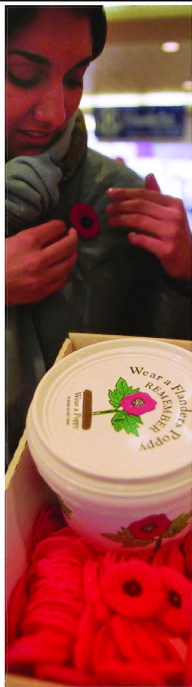
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